

10/9/03

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. (A method of redistributing a medication, the method comprising the steps of:

a) receiving a request to fill a prescription for the medication of a patient serviced by a patient care facility; Chudy

b) assembling unit doses of the medication based upon the prescription, each of the unit doses being individually identified with a lot number and an expiration date; Kerfoot

c) distributing the assembled unit doses to the patient care facility; Chudy

d) receiving an unused portion of the unit doses from the patient care facility;

e) storing the unit doses; and

f) redistributing the unit doses within an indicated expiration date.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein step b) comprises:

1) packaging each of the unit doses individually; and

2) indicating the lot numbers and the expiration dates on each of the respective packaged unit doses.

3. The method of Claim 2 wherein the indicated lot numbers and the expiration dates on each of the individually packaged unit doses are different from each other.

4. The method of Claim 1 wherein step c) comprises:

1) obtaining a unit dose card with a medication receptacle;

2) inserting the unit doses into the medication receptacle of the unit dose card; and

3) enclosing the medication receptacle of the unit dose card for distribution to the patient care facility.

5. The method of Claim 4 wherein the medication receptacle is formed separately with the unit dose card.

6. The method of Claim 5 wherein the medication receptacle is a bag attached to the unit dose card.

7. The method of Claim 4 wherein the medication receptacle is formed unitarily with the unit dose card.

8. The method of Claim 7 wherein the unit dose card is an envelope and the medication receptacle is a pouch of the envelope.

9. The method of Claim 4 wherein step 3) further comprises:

i) indicating patient information on the unit dose card; and

ii) indicating prescription information on the unit dose card.

10. The method of Claim 1 wherein step d) further comprises:

1) identifying an amount of the unused portion of the unit doses;

2) completing a unit dose card provided with the distributed unit doses to record the identified unused portion of the unit doses; and

3) crediting the patient care facility for the identified unused portion of the unit doses.

11. The method of Claim 1 wherein step e) further comprises removing select ones of the unit doses from storage based upon the lot numbers.

12. The method of Claim 1 wherein step e) further comprises removing select ones of the unit doses from storage based upon the expiration dates.

13. A method of mitigating a medication cost for a medication, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) - a) receiving a request to fill a prescription for the medication of a patient serviced by a patient care facility;

(b) b) assembling unit doses of the medication based upon the prescription, each of the unit doses being

individually identified with a lot number and an expiration date;

1(c) c) distributing the assembled unit doses to the patient care facility;

1(d) d) receiving an unused portion of the unit doses from the patient care facility;

1(d1) e) identifying an amount of the unused portion of the unit doses; and

1(d3) f) crediting the patient care facility for the identified unused portion of the unit doses to mitigate the medication cost of the medication.

2- 14. The method of Claim 13 wherein step b) comprises:

1) packaging each of the unit doses individually; and

2) indicating the lot numbers and the expiration dates on each of the respective packaged unit doses.

3- 15. The method of Claim 14 wherein the indicated lot numbers and the expiration dates on each of the individually packaged unit doses are different from each other.

4- 16. The method of Claim 13 wherein step c) comprises:

1) obtaining a unit dose card with a medication receptacle;

2) inserting the unit doses into the medication receptacle of the unit dose card; and

3) enclosing the medication receptacle of the unit dose card for distribution to the patient care facility.

5 - 17. The method of Claim 16 wherein the medication receptacle is formed separately with the unit dose card.

6 - 18. The method of Claim 17 wherein the medication receptacle is a bag attached to the unit dose card.

7 - 19. The method of Claim 16 wherein the medication receptacle is formed unitarily with the unit dose card.

8 - 20. The method of Claim 19 wherein the unit dose card is an envelope and the medication receptacle is a pouch of the envelope.

9 - 21. The method of Claim 16 wherein step 3) further comprises:

i) indicating patient information on the unit dose card; and

ii) indicating prescription information on the unit dose card.

22. The method of Claim 13 wherein step d) further comprises:

10) 1) storing the unused portion of the unit doses; and

11 - 2) removing select ones of the unit doses from storage based upon the lot numbers.

23. The method of Claim 13 wherein step d) further comprises:

11(e) 1) storing the unused portions of the unit doses; and

12 - 2) removing select ones of the unit doses based upon the expiration dates.

24. The method of Claim 13 wherein step e) comprises:

1) separating a unit dose card with provider's and facility's card portions from the unit doses; and

2) recording the amount of the unused portion of the unit doses on the provider's and facility's card portions of the unit dose card.

25. The method of Claim 24 wherein step 2) further comprises:

i) separating the provider's and facility's card portions of the unit dose card;

ii) retaining the provider's card portion of the unit dose card; and

iii) sending the facility's card portion of the unit dose card to the patient care facility.

26. The method of Claim 25 wherein the unit dose card is perforated between the provider's and facility's card portions.

(103) 27. The method of Claim 13 wherein step f) comprises reimbursing the patient care facility for the identified unused portion of the unit doses.

(18)- 28. The method of Claim 13 further comprising:

g) redistributing the unit doses within an indicated expiration date.